

E. BENJAMIN NELSON

U.S. SENATOR FOR NEBRASKA

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NELSON, WESELY ANNOUNCE FEDERAL FUNDS FOR LINCOLN TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

*\$5 million for South and East Beltway, \$1 million for overpass, \$2 million for
UNL SMART research included in Senate Transportation Appropriations.*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Nebraska's Senator Ben Nelson and Lincoln Mayor Don Wesely today announced \$8 million in City of Lincoln and University of Nebraska - Lincoln federal transportation funding to assist the construction of the South and East Beltways, the 17th Street Overpass, and SMART Transportation research. The funding is included in the Senate's transportation appropriations legislation.

"The City of Lincoln and the University of Nebraska will use these federal funds to continue transportation projects that will improve the quality of life in Lincoln," said Nelson. "We are particularly pleased to have secured federal funding this year for the South and East Beltway project for the first time." Nelson has aggressively lobbied the Senate Transportation Committee to secure these needed funds to help the City of Lincoln improve traffic flow in and around Lincoln.

"This is very good for the City of Lincoln. The Beltways and Antelope Valley are the two largest transportation projects in Lincoln history, and federal funding is essential to their success. We are very grateful to Senator Nelson for making these projects a priority and helping secure these federal dollars. Senator Nelson's leadership is essential to securing this funding," said Mayor Wesely.

The Senate transportation appropriations bill includes the following projects sought by Senator Nelson for the City of Lincoln and the University of Nebraska:

City of Lincoln – South and East Beltway Project - \$5 million

The construction of a South and East Beltway System has been identified as the best solution to addressing the increasing traffic concerns facing residents of fast-growing Lincoln. The South Beltway is the first priority of the South and East Beltway system, and is estimated to cost about \$120 million to construct. In order to keep the project on schedule, \$14.25 million must be spent in FY 2003 to complete design, purchase right of way, and begin construction.

City of Lincoln – 17th & Holdrege Bridge/Overpass (Antelope Valley Project) - \$1 million

This bridge is an integral piece of a comprehensive plan to revitalize downtown Lincoln that has emerged from a partnership between the City, the State of Nebraska, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). The federal funds would assist with the design and right-of-way phase of a bridge that would span over Burlington Northern railroad tracks. The roadway connected to the overpass will serve significant traffic flows that are generated from the City's Central Business District, nearby neighborhoods, Nebraska State Fair Park, and the UNL campus.

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University of Nebraska Lincoln – SMART Transportation Research - \$2 million

Safe, efficient and secure transportation in rural areas, which accounts for 80 percent of America's total road mileage, is critical to the nation's safety and economic security. Rural transportation operations and safety can be greatly enhanced by the application of advanced technologies and communications. The University of Nebraska at Lincoln seeks funding for researching intelligent transportation systems relevant to safety, operations and security of rural transportation. This research will develop technologies and guidelines that directly support the Nebraska Department of Roads Intelligent Transportation Program.

Other projects included in the Senate Transportation Appropriations bill include:

- * Metro Area Transit (Omaha) Intermodal Transportation Facility - \$2 million
- * Metro Area Transit (Omaha) South Omaha/Stockyard Transit Center - \$1.5 million
- * Preston North and South in Richardson County, Nebraska - \$1 million
- * Two State Bridge Project between Nebraska and Iowa - \$4 million
- * Buses and Related Equipment - Statewide - \$2 million
- * Statewide ITS Instrumentation - \$5 million
- * University of Nebraska/Marshall University - Rail Initiative Project – \$2 million

The full Senate must now approve the Senate transportation appropriations bill.